

U.S. Department of Education
2013 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program
A Public School - 13NE4

	Charter	Title 1	Magnet	Choice
School Type (Public Schools):	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name of Principal: Mr. Mark Porter

Official School Name: Wisner-Pilger Elementary School

School Mailing Address: 801 18th Street
PO Box 580
Wisner, NE 68791-0580

County: Cuming State School Code Number*: 20-0030-002

Telephone: (402) 529-6465 E-mail: mporter@esu2.org

Fax: (402) 529-6460 Web site/URL: http://www.wisnerpilger.org/

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that all information is accurate.

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent*: Mr. Chad Boyer Ed.S Superintendent e-mail: cboyer@esu2.org

District Name: Wisner-Pilger Public Schools District Phone: (402) 529-3248

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that it is accurate.

(Superintendent's Signature) Date _____

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mr. Chad Dixon

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date _____

**Non-Public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to Aba Kumi, Director, National Blue Ribbon Schools (Aba.Kumi@ed.gov) or mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, National Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173.

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) or its equivalent each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's AYP requirement or its equivalent in the 2012-2013 school year. Meeting AYP or its equivalent must be certified by the state. Any AYP status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take foreign language courses.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2007 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for that period.
6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 or 2012.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district 1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 1 High schools
 0 K-12 schools
 3 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 12443

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Small city or town in a rural area
4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 3
5. Number of students as of October 1, 2012 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	13	18	31
K	11	21	32
1	14	18	32
2	19	20	39
3	11	20	31
4	19	16	35
5	0	0	0
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12	0	0	0
Total in Applying School:			200

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
0 % Asian
1 % Black or African American
9 % Hispanic or Latino
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
90 % White
0 % Two or more races
100 % Total

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2011-2012 school year: 10%
This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Step	Description	Value
(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2011 until the end of the school year.	10
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2011 until the end of the school year.	8
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	18
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2011	189
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.10
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	10

8. Percent of English Language Learners in the school: 0%
Total number of ELL students in the school: 0
Number of non-English languages represented: 0
Specify non-English languages:

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 45%

Total number of students who qualify: 77

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

10. Percent of students receiving special education services: 21%

Total number of students served: 35

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

<u>2</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>5</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>7</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>10</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>3</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>8</u> Developmentally Delayed

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>11</u>	<u>0</u>
Resource teachers/specialists (e.g., reading specialist, media specialist, art/music, PE teachers, etc.)	<u>0</u>	<u>4</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>9</u>	<u>0</u>
Support staff (e.g., school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria aides, etc.)	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>
Total number	<u>24</u>	<u>6</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1:

15:1

13. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	96%	97%	97%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

14. **For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools):**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2012.

Graduating class size:	<u>0</u>
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	<u>0%</u>
Enrolled in a community college	<u>0%</u>
Enrolled in vocational training	<u>0%</u>
Found employment	<u>0%</u>
Military service	<u>0%</u>
Other	<u>0%</u>
Total	<u>0%</u>

15. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award:

☒ No

☐ Yes

If yes, what was the year of the award?

PART III - SUMMARY

Mission Statement

Wisner-Pilger Schools, with the support of the community, is dedicated to educational excellence.

Wisner-Pilger Elementary School (W-PES) has built its foundation upon one idea - a dedication to doing what is best for the students in our building. During the 2008-2009 school year, Wisner-Pilger Elementary adopted the Response to Intervention (RtI) Model as the driving force behind all future curricular and student decisions. Operating under the RtI process, the district began the implementation of an innovative dual core-reading program in 2009 and an equally outstanding math program in 2011.

Over the past four years, Wisner-Pilger Elementary staff members have made many challenging, yet informed decisions in the area of reading to ensure each and every student receives the instruction and intervention needed to build a foundation and find successes at the next level. The process began by instituting a 90-minute reading block for all students in Kindergarten through Grade 4. Analysis of available reading performance data indicated the need for a change in instructional programming. Faculty acknowledged the importance of data-based decision making and has built their unique program upon that premise. Currently, student performance data is systematically collected and analyzed in the areas of phoneme manipulation, phonics, and oral reading fluency. Decisions are made based upon individual student need as well as the needs of instructional groups.

Since 2009, this practice has blossomed into a holistic student data tracking plan through which individual reading programs based upon each student's needs are developed. Finding time within the school day to meet each student's needs has been an ongoing and monumental hurdle that staff members have been working to overcome. At the beginning of the 2012-13 school year, Wisner-Pilger Elementary developed an intervention system in which each grade level has six interventionists working with small groups of one to four students for thirty minutes each day. With this scheduling component in place, interventionists, teachers, administrators, and students themselves are seeing gains in the targeted areas of phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and comprehension.

In 2009, W-PES began collecting math benchmarking data on all Kindergarten through Grade 4 students three times each year. By examining this data, combined with our standardized test scores, the elementary faculty decided it was time to make a change in our approach to math instruction as well. With the adoption of a research-based, vertically aligned math core program in 2011, teachers have also begun to make informed and data-based decisions for our students in the areas of number sense, geometry, algebra, data analysis/probability, and measurement. Following just one year of implementation, Wisner-Pilger found the students and the teachers to be growing more than ever before in the area of mathematics. Next steps will include the addition of progress monitoring data collection and analysis to inform decisions made for students in math. W-PES also will begin to offer research-based math interventions as determined by student need.

Since 2004, the percentage of students in our district coming from low-income families has increased over 10 percent. Wisner-Pilger Elementary's migrant student population has also increased over the same time period. Today, staff at W-PES finds themselves serving a very different learner than those served ten years ago. In that same time period, Wisner-Pilger Elementary has progressed from seeing these statistics as a limitation, to using this data to make instructional decisions to best benefit learners. Now, more than ever before, teachers at Wisner-Pilger Elementary are actively seeking out the most effective techniques and strategies to match the needs of the current student population.

What makes Wisner-Pilger Elementary worthy of being a Blue Ribbon School? Above all, it is the determination of students and teachers! The most important resource at Wisner-Pilger Elementary School is an outstanding faculty who is willing to make data-based decisions with the best interest of students in mind. As any experienced educator would state, it is teachers, not programs, that make the difference! This great group of supporting people at Wisner-Pilger Elementary School has put in endless hours and made tough decisions so that their students will be prepared to be tomorrow's community leaders. Any successes experienced within the walls of Wisner-Pilger Elementary can be attributed to a commitment by educators to do what is best for all students who walk through their doors each day and a willingness by those students to give their best effort.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

A) Like all schools in Nebraska, Wisner-Pilger Elementary third and fourth graders all participate in the Nebraska Statewide Accountability-Reading (NeSA-R) and -Math (NeSA-M) assessments each spring. The scores are unveiled to the districts the following October. Nebraska Department of Education disseminates the scores to the district for each student as a raw score (0-45) and a scaled score (1-200). These scores are then classified into three categories: *below* the standard, *meets* the standard, and *exceeds* the standard. Students achieving scale scores between 1 and 84 fall into the *below* the standard category. Students achieving scale scores between 85 and 129 fall into the *meets* the standard category. Students achieving scale scores between 130 and 200 fall into the *exceeds* the standard category. Each year, the federal expectations delineated in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act increase. Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) required that 78 percent of our students in the elementary grades reach the *meets* or *exceeds* level in reading and that 67 percent of our elementary students reach the *meets* or *exceeds* level in math for the 2011-2012 school year. Wisner-Pilger Elementary School attained both of these goals. These goals both increase by approximately 10 percentage points for the 2012-2013 school year, and will be at the 100 percent mark by the 2013-2014 school year. Wisner-Pilger students are expected to meet these AYP goals until they become unrealistic and unattainable.

B) State assessment data in Nebraska is somewhat difficult to examine longitudinally over the past five years as a reliable measure of trend data. In the past, Nebraska allowed schools to develop their own paper/pencil standardized assessments, known as School-based Teacher-led Assessment and Reporting System (STARS), which could be administered multiple times following opportunities to learn and reteach until a student achieved success. These standardized assessments were developed locally or with assessment consortiums. This was the practice through 2009-10 for reading and 2010-11 for math. Since those dates, a state assessment (Nebraska State Accountability) was developed by educators statewide under the direction of the Nebraska Department of Education and the newly adopted Nebraska State Standards. These assessments are to be administered to all public school students in Grades 3-8 and 11. Initially, schools were permitted to take the reading and math tests in the paper/pencil format or the online format. This eased the transition to the new format. During the 2011-12 school year, all schools were required to administer these assessments online.

Wisner-Pilger Elementary School opted to utilize the online format from the beginning for two reasons. First, it was indicated early in this process by the Nebraska Department of Education that eventually all tests would be administered online. Consequently, W-PES decided to administer the online format from the beginning so that a later change would not be a variable in data interpretation. Secondly, W-PES had the technological capacity to administer all tests online without encumbering the district. Students with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) are still able to take tests in the paper/pencil format if it is written in their IEP, and the IEP team feels that the computer-based format would not provide an accurate depiction of the student's abilities.

When comparing the first years of NeSA assessments to the previously administered and locally developed STARS assessments, schools statewide saw a decline in the number of students achieving the *meets* benchmark and *exceeds* benchmark levels. Wisner-Pilger Elementary School also saw this drop in achievement levels in the transition years. After considering this new data, W-PES made decisions to refine its hiring process, select a new math core, and further explore best instructional and intervention practices in the area of reading/language arts.

The district moved away from a traditional model of interviewing to an updated and more rigorous model focused on selecting teachers who are able to interpret standards and are fluent in assessment policies and data interpretation. Wisner-Pilger Public Schools is also increasing accountability for administrators and

teachers by participating in the Nebraska Pilot Program for Teacher and Principal Evaluation. The new model will drive the overall professional development framework for the district and facilitate individual professional growth.

During the 2010-11 school year Wisner-Pilger Elementary School adopted a new math core. This was done in the wake of receiving new Nebraska State Accountability data that reflected a need for improvements in the area of math instruction. A core selection group spent several months of the school year reading articles and excerpts from the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics on the topic of best practices in mathematics instruction. The group then evaluated three possible core options. By year's end, a selection was made and, the professional development and implementation process continued. Following the first year of new core implementation, 2011-12 NeSA-M scores indicated that Wisner-Pilger Elementary students are achieving at or above state recommended levels. With only one year of new core data and two years of Nebraska State Accountability data, it is difficult to see the long term impacts of this change. With the supports W-PES has in place, achievement trends are likely to continue to increase.

Wisner-Pilger Elementary School implemented a dual core reading program during the 2009-10 school year. During the first three full years of implementation, W-PES has continued to refine teaching practices within the core and intervention programs. This has been accomplished by cooperation with various support organizations and collaborating with surrounding districts. School leaders continue to participate in relevant and available professional development. As W-PES moves forward with these changes, a steady increase in our limited objective data has been noted. The pursuit of best instructional programs and practices will allow these trends to continue to increase.

2. Using Assessment Results:

As part of the RtI process, Wisner-Pilger Elementary uses both formative and summative data to make decisions about student program placement in the areas of math and reading. Student performance data is also used to make decisions regarding movement within these instructional programs.

Each year, the district reading coordinator uses placement data and other pieces of information to configure our Preschool through Grade 4 walk-to-read reading/language groups. The reading coordinator then shares this information with the Kindergarten through Grade 4 teachers and works with them to facilitate delivering instruction within the reading block. The reading program adopted by Wisner-Pilger Elementary has integrated weekly checkouts that the teacher uses to track individual student and group progress. Data is also collected from our progress monitoring system to track student growth in the areas of phoneme manipulation, phonics, and fluency. The Nebraska State Accountability-Reading (NeSA-R) results and the Measure of Academic Progress-Reading (MAP) assessment results are also referenced when making individual student programming decisions. Three times each year, benchmarking assessments are administered to each student. That data is also used as a checkpoint to validate program placement. Teachers, the reading coordinator, and the principal meet five times annually to discuss this data in grade level team meetings. In these meetings, each student's data is analyzed, and decisions are made regarding their placement within the program. The team also discusses intervention placement. All *intensive* (at-risk) students and nearly all *strategic* (some-risk) students at Wisner-Pilger receive 30 minutes of intervention in one or more individually targeted area(s).

Wisner-Pilger Elementary faculty has begun making data-driven decisions in the area of math during the 2012-2013 school year. Wisner-Pilger Elementary students participate in the Nebraska State Accountability-Math assessment (NeSA-M) each spring. Students complete the Measure of Academic Progress Math (MAP - Math) assessment each May. Students are also administered the Curriculum Based Measure - Math three times each year. One final piece of data, for math, is the in-program assessments given every five lessons to students in Kindergarten through Grade 4. Initially, this data was used to support the selection of a core math program to best meet the needs of all Wisner-Pilger Elementary students. During the 2011-2012 school year, the district formed a coalition of teachers willing to

subjectively look at the data from state and norm-referenced assessments and make an informed decision as to which core program would best fit the demographic at Wisner-Pilger Elementary School. During the current school year, math conversations are integrated into grade level data meetings held five times each year. Data-based decisions are made to obtain a match between intervention and skill deficit. Decisions are also made to determine whether intervention can take place in the classroom or during a separate intervention time.

In addition to the periodic grade level data analysis meetings, the Wisner-Pilger Elementary Reading Coordinator also meets weekly with each reading teacher and interventionist. In this way, individual student progress, as measured by in- and out-of-program data, can be further pinpointed to determine the optimal instructional course and intervention match.

Each month, parents receive a newsletter composed by the building principal. Parents find district assessment data, an RtI update, important dates, and curricular decisions in these newsletters. Midway through each academic period, and at the end of each quarter, parents receive progress reports with updates on how their student is achieving in the core areas of math, language arts, science, and social studies.

In the fall of each year, all parents receive an official copy of their child's scores in the areas of math and reading from the Nebraska State Accountability assessments (NeSA) administered in the spring of the previous school year. A letter encouraging parents to discuss the results of these assessments with their child's teachers accompanies the test results.

In October of each year, all parents are invited in to conference with their child(ren)'s teacher(s). They are invited to meet with the classroom and reading teacher. During this time, the teacher shares the prior year's Measure of Academic Reading/Math/Science/Language (MAP) scores with the parents. In January of each school year, the parents are again invited to visit with their child(ren)'s reading and homeroom teachers. Assessment data are reviewed, and parents are given the opportunity to ask questions about their child's academic growth and achievement. Universal screening data are also shared with parents three times each school year following each benchmarking period (fall/winter/spring) via a Report to Parents. These results are shared in person at the fall and winter parent teacher conferences and as part of students' end-of-year information packets each spring.

Each January, the Wisner-Pilger School District unveils its district report card. This report card is a compilation of student demographic information and achievement test scores. A copy of this report card is sent to the Wisner News Chronicle for publication. Each building in the district also displays a copy for the public.

3. Sharing Lessons Learned:

Wisner-Pilger Elementary school is a member of the Nebraska Response to Intervention Consortium. This group of individuals works together with the assistance of a Technical Assistance Provider, assigned by the consortium, to collectively make program decisions. As part of this consortium, RtI committee members attend various trainings with other partnering schools in Nebraska. At these trainings, Wisner-Pilger Elementary is given the opportunity to work with other districts to share successes and failures.

The Wisner-Pilger District Reading Coordinator attends Nebraska Instructional Coaches Network meetings four times each year to work with other reading coordinators/coaches from across the state. The reading coordinator works to build relationships with other districts in the state. This opportunity has helped W-PES to grow as a school in the area of reading. The network members collaborate with each other to develop strategies to support student success.

The building principal attends quarterly meetings at the affiliated Educational Service Unit 2 in Fremont, Nebraska. The principal shares the district's progress within the RtI process at these meetings. Time is set aside to discuss triumphs and tribulations. This is a mutually beneficial time for all districts involved.

A group of teachers and a district administrator have attended the annual National Institute for Direct Instruction Conference in Eugene, Oregon. While at the conference, the attendees have had the opportunity to receive training in areas targeted by the district as deserving support. Time is also allotted at this five-day conference to collaborate with other teachers, coordinators, and administrators. Topics of discussion include, but are not limited to interventions, assimilation of new information and practices, and program specific training in the area of reading.

Each year at local conferences and meetings, Wisner-Pilger Elementary School opens its doors to other districts looking to embark upon a similar journey. The ideas shared in these collaborative opportunities are also brought back to the district and discussed at Response to Intervention meetings held quarterly. This team makes informed decisions based upon new information received and trends in research and programming to better meet the needs of Wisner-Pilger Elementary students.

In 2009, two nearby school district visited Wisner-Pilger Elementary in effort to gain insight into the RtI process as well as the selection of a research-based reading core to meet the needs of their similar student demographic. In 2012, another neighboring district visited W-PES after examining their student performance data and realizing a program change was necessary to better meet the needs of their students. Visiting teachers observed instruction in a number of classrooms. As part of each visit, Wisner-Pilger teachers also spent time talking to the teachers from the surrounding districts, highlighting potential barriers to successful implementation and celebrations along the way. Wisner-Pilger Elementary staff readily welcomes such opportunities to share experiences to the benefit of more learners.

4. Engaging Families and Communities:

Each August, Wisner-Pilger Elementary School hosts an open house event where students invite their parents and extended family members to visit their classrooms. During this time, the teachers share curricular objectives and goals for the year with families and community members. This event has been well received by the community, and gives the parents and teachers the opportunity to open doors of communication at the beginning of the year.

Wisner-Pilger Elementary School made a change during the 2010-2011 school year in scheduling parent-teacher conferences. Now, parents have the opportunity to register for a convenient time slot for their parent-teacher conference. After registering, the school compiles a parent-teacher conference schedule and notifies parents of the exact time for their conference. The parents meet with both the homeroom teacher and the reading teacher. Time is allotted for meeting with the special education and speech/language pathologist as needed. Faculty members have found that this gives teachers and parents the opportunity to connect in person to share strengths, growth, and needs in the core content areas as well as the social domain. This secures parental confidence that what the school is doing for their student is best meeting their instructional needs.

Wisner-Pilger Elementary School strives to give students the opportunity to apply the knowledge they are presented with in class in a concrete environment. Each year, the district partners with the Wisner-Pilger Community Schools Foundation to provide students in Preschool through Grade 4 with these hands-on experiences. Annually, a grant is written to cover the costs of our grade-level field trips. Students and teachers visit regional locations where they are able to interact with and experience the curriculum first-hand. Teachers have found that these types of experiences are the ones that connect the curriculum to life and form lasting impressions for students.

The Wisner-Pilger School District has also partnered with the Louis and Abby Faye Dinklage Foundation, a local non-profit entity, for many years to aid in providing for the technology needs of the district. The Dinklage Foundation was established nearly twenty years ago to help provide grant-based financial support for the local school district, community, and county. When the district is in need of computers, personal devices, smart boards, projectors, etc., the Dinklage Foundation has willingly funded district requests. In 2010, Wisner-Pilger Schools implemented a one-to-one initiative, installed smart boards in classrooms district-wide, and provided computers for each teacher in the district. The Dinklage Foundation fully funded these opportunities. Wisner-Pilger Elementary students have ongoing access to these pieces of technology, better preparing them for future educational and career endeavors.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

Wisner-Pilger strives to maintain curricular alignment to the Nebraska State Standards in the core content areas. The Language Arts standards were adopted by the Nebraska State Board of Education in 2009. The ongoing process of local alignment began in the 2010-11 school year and continued into 2011-12. With the implementation of the dual core, Wisner-Pilger was faced with the challenge of ensuring that, regardless of the core program, all students had the opportunity to master curricular objectives. Local curricular objectives were organized into high achievement outcomes that were then cross-referenced with both core programs. Nebraska State Standards for Language Arts are cited within teaching guides in use at Wisner-Pilger Elementary.

The Nebraska Department of Education adopted State Standards for Mathematics in 2009. Wisner-Pilger Elementary had previously aligned their local curriculum to the existing standards in 2007. However, with the selection and implementation of a new math core within the district, a formal alignment process has not taken place since then. Wisner-Pilger Elementary faculty strongly considered the concepts and processes within the Nebraska State Standards for Mathematics at the time of core selection. An informal inventory of key terminology and concepts has been conducted to ensure alignment of local curriculum with state standards. Formal alignment is scheduled to take place in the spring of 2013.

Science/Health standards for the state of Nebraska were adopted in 2010. Prior formalized alignment of local science/health curriculum to state standards had taken place within the district in 2006. Local curriculum needs in the areas of reading/language arts and mathematics have taken precedence over the alignment of science/health curriculum. Wisner-Pilger Elementary will dedicate time toward this effort during the 2013-14 school year.

Social Studies standards for the state of Nebraska were adopted in 2012. Work with local social studies curriculum, previously completed on a formal basis in 2005, will commence following the state/local alignment in the area of science/health.

The State of Nebraska has not adopted standards in the content areas of physical education, art, music, and technology. Rather local curricula have been developed using national frameworks or being modeled after standards from other states.

Wisner-Pilger Elementary's physical education curriculum is based upon national benchmarks for elementary grade levels. The overlying philosophy of the program at W-PES is to promote a lifetime of physical activity and overall good health. Locally the program also emphasizes cooperation, individual and team problem solving, and healthy social interaction as a member of a group.

Wisner-Pilger Elementary's art curriculum was developed approximately five years ago based upon standards from the states of Colorado, Florida, and California. Components addressed by elementary students center around the Elements and Principles of Design including art history, studio art, contour drawing, color theory, two-dimensional and three-dimensional projects, and public service opportunities. Students also have the opportunity to display samples of their work at area county fairs each summer.

Elementary music curriculum at Wisner-Pilger was also formally developed and aligned approximately five years ago based upon the National Standards for Music Education. Teaching and learning music at Wisner-Pilger Elementary follows a systematic approach to address music performance as an outcome, as well as music notation including rhythm and notes, coordination and movement, and cross curricular

activities. Fourth Grade students at Wisner-Pilger Elementary are all required to learn to play the recorder, which transitions them to formal instrumental music education in Grade 5 if they so choose.

Technology at Wisner-Pilger Elementary is not viewed as a separate curricular area. However, it is the mission of W-PES to apply technology to the educational process in all areas of instruction. Students at Wisner-Pilger Elementary have access to up-to-date technology including a 20-seat lab of iMac computers, multiple iPod touches, and smart board technology, and an iPad in every classroom. At the lower elementary level, students are utilizing technology as a vehicle for exploration and practice. In the upper elementary grades, students are beginning to use technology as a vehicle to demonstrate their learning.

The Nebraska Department of Education has yet to adopt Common Core State Standards (CCSS). However, Common Core State Standards were influential in developing each set of Nebraska State Standards in core content areas. Wisner-Pilger Schools acknowledge that a change in membership on the state board of education could result in adoption of the CCSS in the near future. It should also be noted that Nebraska State Accountability assessments were developed based upon currently adopted Nebraska State Standards, not the Common Core State Standards.

2. Reading/English:

In 2009, Wisner-Pilger Elementary School began the implementation of a unique dual core reading program. This decision was made as a result of the School Improvement team and the entire K-6 faculty examining the district's changing student demographic and the corresponding achievement scores. Wisner-Pilger Elementary School found itself serving more at-risk students in the area of reading than ever before. A key component to the successful implementation of the reading program was to schedule a block of time each day during which reading took priority over all other programs. A 90-minute block of time was allocated for reading instruction for students in Grades 1-4. Following first year implementation of a 90-minute block scheduled for reading in Kindergarten, the district has since increased that allocated time to 120 minutes for those students.

The decision to adopt a dual core was based solely upon the needs of the varying demographic of students within the district. The first of two core programs available to W-PES students follows a vertically designed Direct Instruction model. This program is offered to students in Kindergarten through Grade 6 at Wisner-Pilger Schools. The Direct Instruction program is based upon the idea that the English language is made up of sounds, that students can relate these sounds to shapes, and they can eventually put meaning to these sounds when strung together into words, phrases, and sentences. All Kindergarten through Grade 2 Wisner-Pilger Elementary students are provided a reading foundation utilizing this Direct Instruction program. The second program is a more traditional literature-based basal program. This reading core is offered for students in Grades 3-6, given they are reading at or above grade level. Instruction delivered to students in the basal core is also differentiated based upon core performance, placement, universal screener, and diagnostic data as well as teacher recommendations. Students are placed in learning groups in which instruction is tailored to meet their specific needs. These students participate in this program because it is structured to extend and challenge their thinking and learning in the areas of literary analysis. Students reading below grade level continue to receive core reading instruction through the Direct Instruction program.

Students at Wisner-Pilger Elementary School performing below grade level are identified through the administration of a universal screener, progress monitoring probes, core performance, in-program placement tests, diagnostic data, and teacher input. The teachers, principal, and reading coordinator develop and review programming needs and individualized intervention plans for these students at grade level data meetings.

For the past three years, both programs have been successfully implemented. Teachers continue to spend many hours participating in ongoing professional development trainings and activities to ensure the

programs are delivered with fidelity. Teachers new to the district attend program-specific trainings similar to those available prior to initial implementation. The reading coordinator visits classrooms weekly to facilitate growth in program delivery. This has developed into a continuous cycle of improvement in the area of reading and language arts as a whole.

3. Mathematics:

During the 2010-2011 school year, Wisner-Pilger Elementary organized a math core selection team to review the school's current math core program and district curriculum. After analyzing school improvement data, the team decided that the changing dynamic of the students served at W-PES would be better served by a vertically aligned core program that matched their needs as a whole. The core selection team looked to Principles and Standards for School Mathematics written by the National Council for Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) as a guide for selecting a core math program. They framed their selection based upon NCTM's recommendations for content standard emphasis and compared those recommendations to three core programs. After systematically reviewing each core, the team selected a core program with a direct instruction approach that continually supports students in their prior learning. Sixty minutes of instructional time in the area of math is allotted each day for students in Kindergarten through Grade 4.

All students at Wisner-Pilger Elementary School participate in a Curriculum Based Measure for Mathematics three times each year in the fall, winter, and spring. The data collected by this measure within the areas of number sense, geometry, algebra, measurement, and data/probability serves to support overall programming and intervention needs of individual students. After every five lessons within the math program, each student takes a cumulative math assessment to gauge their progress on the concepts they have covered in the previous five lessons. The district also administers the Nebraska State Accountability-Math (NeSA-M) assessment each spring and a Measure of Academic Progress-Math (MAP) assessment each fall and spring. The data obtained from these assessments helps to configure homogeneous math groups where students are grouped by supports needed. During grade level data meetings, student needs and group reconfiguration is discussed.

It is a goal of Wisner-Pilger Elementary to further refine the RtI process as it is enacted in the content area of mathematics. Nationally, scientifically research-based instruments, methodologies, and support are not readily accessible in the area of math, thus causing districts to have to move forward with fewer of these standardized tools and materials in place. As these resources become increasingly available, Wisner-Pilger Elementary will access them for the purpose of instructional improvement. W-PES will also continue to collaborate with the RtI consortium and participate in program specific trainings in the area of mathematics instruction and intervention as available.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

Physical Education

Approximately five years ago, Wisner-Pilger Elementary School took the initiative to provide a healthier environment for its students. The district chose to focus on providing healthier food choices as part of the district food service program and creating an environment that supports healthy lifestyles and physical activity.

Wisner-Pilger Elementary School enacted these decisions by also making changes in handbook policy. The snack policy was updated by adding a statement encouraging students to bring healthy snacks for classroom celebrations. The lunch policy was also updated to suggest that parents pack healthy lunches for those students bringing lunch from home. A "no soda at school" statement was also added to the lunch policy.

Because motor movement and cardio activity are proven to positively impact student achievement, W-PES also began to place more emphasis on integrating these experiences into the school day with greater frequency. An adjustment to the daily schedule ensures that each student has 30 minutes of physical education each day. Teachers also worked to meld more opportunities for kinesthetic movement in the classroom. Wisner-Pilger Elementary staff members also saw a need to ensure students were getting the time provided in their schedules for recess. This practice was found to be beneficial for all students, but especially beneficial for students with extra sensory needs. Each morning students who arrive prior to the beginning of the school day participate in a walking program. Laps around the gym or playground (weather permitting) are logged. This practice also promotes healthy lifestyle choices.

5. Instructional Methods:

In the subject of math, W-PES has chosen a model of direct instruction that matches the demographic needs of the students being served. However, the need to differentiate instruction still exists in the area of math. In Kindergarten through Grade 2, all students participate in a teacher-led lesson, complete guided practice activities with the teacher, and complete a similarly structured independent practice sheet. The students are able to use the guided practice materials during work time or at home to help support them while answering questions about their independent practice.

In Grade 3, students transition into a more traditional math textbook format. The curriculum continues to be spiraled, but the instructional delivery format changes. To aide in this transition, W-PES spends the first four weeks of school transitioning to the textbook format by using the adaptation worksheets with the students. These worksheets serve as an intermediary step between the two formats; they are less supportive than the worksheets from the K-2 programs and more supportive than copying problems independently from the textbook. During this time, the teacher makes observations of all students, noting those who may be having difficulties transitioning to the textbook format. After the first four weeks of school, the Grade 3 classroom teachers, with the support of the principal, makes the decision regarding which students will stay in a small group of intermediate worksheets and which students are ready to be working out from the textbooks. W-PES strives to have as many students as possible fully transitioned to the textbook format before the end of Grade 3. A small group of students typically continue to work in the intermediate format due to their need for this level of support. The small grouping allows these individual students to be supported and provides the teacher with a structure for monitoring and adjusting teaching methods.

In the areas of reading and language arts, Wisner-Pilger Elementary School offers a dual core through which all students in Kindergarten through Grade 2 are taught to read using a core program with a strong emphasis on phonics and continuous blending. Following Grade 2, students are either placed in a literature-based traditional basal core or remain in the Direct Instruction program. The core placement decision is made by grade level teams that discuss results of various district assessments, including placement tests designed by the Direct Instruction and basal programs. The reading coordinator and grade level teachers then group students accordingly by current level of performance. All students in Kindergarten through Grade 4 receive a minimum of 90 minutes of reading instruction each day.

For those students displaying skill deficits in a given area of reading, the grade level team meets to make decisions about program placement and intervention needs for each student. Each grade level also has 30 minutes each day built into their schedule for interventions and enrichment. Students who would benefit from enrichment participate in such activities during this time, while students who would benefit from interventions in the areas of math and reading engage in these activities during this time. The reading coordinator sets the framework for this intervention and enrichment time, works with support staff to develop and carry out appropriate match between skill deficit and interventions, and ensures the interventions are being implemented with fidelity.

All teachers at Wisner-Pilger Elementary School have access to a variety of technology resources. Each teacher has an iPad, Smart Board, MacBook Pro computer, document camera, and access to a 20-seat

iMac computer lab shared by all grade levels. The school district employs two technology coordinators who facilitate the integration of these technologies into the classroom. The classroom teachers have become technology leaders with their iPads and computers. They meet weekly to support one another with the various technologies available to them. Teachers use their iPads to present instructional pieces on their smart boards. This assists them in maintaining proximity to their students for the purpose of active monitoring while teaching. Technology has become an integral part of preparing students for the future. Wisner-Pilger Elementary Teachers strive to integrate technology opportunities in their classrooms across the curriculum. Doing so, builds a strong foundation for the future development of technology skills.

6. Professional Development:

Wisner-Pilger Elementary faculty and staff participate in professional development activities that are directly linked to improving instructional practice and the district's school improvement goal - to improve reading comprehension and math problem solving skills for all students. During the past five years, teachers, paraprofessionals, administrators, and support staff have attended program-specific training in the areas of reading and math. Staff have also received training on specific intervention programs as well as research-based instructional practices.

Wisner-Pilger Elementary is in its first year of developing a new professional development framework. In March of 2012, the decision was made to join a group of schools in Nebraska who were willing to pilot a new teacher evaluation system that better supports teachers in their professional growth. A Leadership Team compiled of master teachers spanning across grade ranges and disciplines was created. This team began to consider two different models for teacher evaluation. The team found that the readings were more about what good teaching looks like and less about what a traditional evaluation looked like. Professional conversations continue to take place regarding the efforts necessary for the entire faculty to embrace the changes that transpire as a result of the implementation of the new evaluation system.

Wisner-Pilger Public Schools is currently teaming with the Educational Service Unit 2 to facilitate working through a set of professional readings, which support what good instruction should look like across the curriculum. At the same time, the Leadership Team has been working to structure the new evaluation system. The Leadership Team revisited a goal of the district: to provide professional development in areas that result in increased student achievement. The Leadership Team is currently developing a new professional development plan that aligns to the new teacher and principal standards and will be responsive to future school smart goals.

Wisner-Pilger Elementary School believes that if these three components come together, - student learning standards, teacher performance standards, and the teacher evaluation system - the result will be increased student achievement. Wisner-Pilger Elementary School will continue to be a place of learning where all children will have the opportunity to reach their fullest potential.

7. School Leadership:

Wisner-Pilger Elementary School employs a shared leadership philosophy. The Principal and Reading Coordinator strive to organize and/or attend any and all professional development needed to support instructional and intervention delivery. In order for the school leaders to properly support instruction, they must stay on the leading edge of what quality instruction in the classroom looks and sounds like. Without this in place, the entire concept of shared leadership would be non-existent.

Wisner-Pilger Elementary School has four distinct, yet interdependent leadership entities; Response to Intervention Team, School Improvement Team, Reading Coordinator, and Principal. Each team or role has its own unique responsibilities, yet each relies upon and supports the others. The main role of the RtI Team is to continually develop and support our reading and math programs. The main function of the School Improvement Team is to analyze district wide trend data and make decisions which mapping

future directions for meeting student needs within the school. The Reading Coordinator organizes all aspects of the reading program including, but not limited to monitoring instructional and intervention delivery with fidelity, data-based decision making regarding student performance, and coordinating the administration of related assessments. The building principal serves as an advocate for doing what is best for our students in a holistic sense. The principal also ensures that each team keeps student achievement at the forefront when making all decisions.

Whether selecting professional development pieces, changing policies, updating programs, or allocating resources, Wisner-Pilger Elementary School spends ample time researching and developing systematic approaches to ensure that changes made are in the best interest of the students at W-PES. When new policies are developed at Wisner-Pilger Elementary School, the following procedure is used to make informed decisions: explore what surrounding districts with similar student needs have done, access community feedback, and petition for teacher input. When implementing new programs or making program changes, W-PES makes it a priority to analyze data first. Leaders at Wisner-Pilger Elementary School make decisions based upon facts, not feelings. Student demographics, achievement data, and current practice inform these decisions. This approach trickles down from the leadership to the other staff members as well.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 3 Test: Nebraska State Accountability Math

Edition/Publication Year: 2012 Publisher: Nebraska

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Meets : Exceeds	94	55	93	89	87
Exceeds	18	12	61	68	61
Number of students tested	34	33	28	28	31
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Meets : Exceeds	94	41	Masked	83	100
Exceeds	13	8	Masked	67	67
Number of students tested	16	12	8	12	19
2. African American Students					
Meets : Exceeds	0	0	Masked	0	0
Exceeds	0	0	Masked	0	0
Number of students tested			1		
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Meets : Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	0
Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	0
Number of students tested	1	2	1	2	
4. Special Education Students					
Meets : Exceeds	100	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	20	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	10	9	5	5	6
5. English Language Learner Students					
Meets : Exceeds	0	0	0	0	0
Exceeds	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested					
6. White					
Meets : Exceeds	94	58	92	88	87
Exceeds	19	13	64	65	61
Number of students tested	32	31	25	26	31
NOTES:					
Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested.					

13NE4

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 3 Test: Nebraska State Accountability Reading

Edition/Publication Year: 2012 Publisher: Nebraska

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Meets : Exceeds	94	61	79	82	84
Exceeds	33	18	21	64	65
Number of students tested	34	33	28	28	31
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Meets : Exceeds	94	33	Masked	67	Masked
Exceeds	44	17	Masked	42	Masked
Number of students tested	16	12	8	12	9
2. African American Students					
Meets : Exceeds	0	0	0	0	0
Exceeds	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Meets : Exceeds	Masked	0	0	Masked	0
Exceeds	Masked	0	0	Masked	0
Number of students tested	1			1	
4. Special Education Students					
Meets : Exceeds	90	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	50	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	10	9	5	5	6
5. English Language Learner Students					
Meets : Exceeds	0	0	0	0	0
Exceeds	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested					
6. White					
Meets : Exceeds	94	65	84	81	84
Exceeds	31	19	24	62	64
Number of students tested	32	31	25	26	31
NOTES:					
Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested.					

13NE4

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 4 Test: Nebraska Accountability Math

Edition/Publication Year: 2012 Publisher: Nebraska

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Meets : Exceeds	100	69	97	94	94
Exceeds	38	31	75	74	72
Number of students tested	34	26	36	34	36
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Meets : Exceeds	100	60	92	80	91
Exceeds	27	20	58	60	64
Number of students tested	15	10	12	10	11
2. African American Students					
Meets : Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	1	1	1	1	1
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Meets : Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	2	1	1	1	1
4. Special Education Students					
Meets : Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	9	6	4	5	4
5. English Language Learner Students					
Meets : Exceeds	0	0	0	0	0
Exceeds	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested					
6. White					
Meets : Exceeds	100	78	97	94	94
Exceeds	42	33	79	75	76
Number of students tested	31	24	33	32	33
NOTES:					
Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested.					

13NE4

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 4 Test: Nebraska State Accountability Reading

Edition/Publication Year: 2012 Publisher: Nebraska

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Meets : Exceeds	100	77	81	88	88
Exceeds	39	23	33	66	58
Number of students tested	33	26	36	32	33
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Meets : Exceeds	100	60	67	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	21	0	17	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	14	10	12	9	9
2. African American Students					
Meets : Exceeds	100	0	0	0	Masked
Exceeds	0	0	0	0	Masked
Number of students tested					1
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Meets : Exceeds	Masked	Masked		Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked		Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	2	1		2	1
4. Special Education Students					
Meets : Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	8	6	4	6	3
5. English Language Learner Students					
Meets : Exceeds	0	0	0	0	0
Exceeds	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested					
6. White					
Meets : Exceeds	100	79	81	88	90
Exceeds	43	25	31	66	63
Number of students tested	30	24	26	32	30
NOTES:					
Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested.					

13NE423